

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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P R 220808Z JUN 78
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1145
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1892

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CH VN PEPR SREF SOPHN
SUBJ: WESTERN JOURNALISTS TO TOUR PRC-VIETNAM BORDER AREA

1. REUTERS CORRESPONDENT IAN MCKENZIE TOLD USLO THAT REPRESENTATIVES FROM THREE PEKING-BASED NEWS AGENCIES AND A HONG KONG JOURNALIST HAVE BEEN GRANTED PERMISSION TO TRAVEL TO THE PRC-NORTH VIETNAM BORDER AREA IN YUNNAN PROVINCE. IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST MADE SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, THE INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF THE PRC'S MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS INFORMED REUTERS, KYODO, AFP, AND THE NEW ZEALAND PRESS ASSOCIATION'S HONG KONG CORRESPONDENT (CURRENTLY IN PEKING) JUNE 22 THAT AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES COULD TRAVEL TO YUNNAN FOR THE PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWING CHINESE WHO HAVE RECENTLY RETURNED FROM VIETNAM. THE JOURNALISTS WILL LEAVE PEKING JUNE 26 AND STAY IN YUNNAN FOR ONE WEEK. THE INFORMATION DEPARTMENT HAS NOT REVEALED THE EXACT DESTINATION OF THE TOUR BUT THE JOURNALISTS EXPECT TO
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BE TAKEN TO THE VIETNAMESE BORDER AREA.

2. COMMENT: THE INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OBVIOUSLY HOPES THAT THE TRIP WILL PRODUCE "EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS" OF ALLEGED VIETNAMESE MISTREATMENT OF THE CHINESE IN VIETNAM. COMING IN THE WAKE OF CLOSING THE VIETNAMESE CONSULATES IN THE PRC AND THE CANCELLATION OF SEVERAL

PRC AID PROJECTS IN VIETNAM, AN INTENSIFIED PROPAGANDA
CAMPAIGN WILL MORE THAN LIKELY DEEPEN THE DISPUTE.
WE FEEL THAT BOTH SIDES WISH TO AVOID A FORMAL BREAK
IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BUT THE CONTINUING PROPAGANDA
CAMPAIGN,DISPUTES OVER THE PRC'S EVACUATION OF
CHINESE FROM HAIPHONG AND SAIGON, AND WORSENING RELATIONS
COULD RESULT IN A DOWNGRADING OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS TO THE
CHARGE LEVEL IN PEKING AS WELL AS IN HANOI.
WOODCOCK

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Message Attributes

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